



# CONNECTICUT CONSUMER PROTECTION MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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## SCAM ALERT

**What it is:** Pet Scams

**How it works:** Scammers advertise pets for sale online, often using stolen photos and offering popular or hard to find breeds at low prices. After you express interest, they demand upfront payment for the pet, shipping, or veterinary fees. Once the money is sent, the scammer disappears and no pet is delivered.

## How to protect yourself:

Never send money for a pet you have not seen in person. Be cautious of sellers who refuse video calls, rush the sale, or request payment through gift cards, wire transfer or cryptocurrency. Research breeders or sellers carefully and report suspicious listings to the advertising platform.

## Signing up for a health club in 2026? Don't "drop the ball" on your research

As we approach the new year, we are flooded with health club enrollment ads. We want to jump in, commit, make healthier choices. But before we do, we have to pause, ask questions, and do our **research**.

**Health club contracts shouldn't be a workout. Follow this checklist before you sign up:**

- ✓ **Do your research:** Find some health club or gym options in your area and read through the reviews. Does the location, equipment, and hours meet your needs?
- ✓ **Schedule a visit:** Plan to visit the health club or gym during your desired workout time. This will help assess how busy the gym will be. You should never sign an online contract without visiting the location first.

*Most health clubs offer free tours. Some places even provide a free or discounted day pass for prospective members.*

- ✓ **Review the contract:** State law requires health clubs to provide a written contract to members. Before consumers sign, they should know exactly how much they are paying, what the fees are, when the bill comes, and what the cancellation policy is.

*Health club contracts cannot be longer than two years. They must also provide a one-year contract.*

- ✓ **Ask questions:** If you do not understand parts of the contract, be sure to ask the staff questions before you sign.

*Some health clubs offer different membership plans based on the desired needs (basic vs. premium). Clarify what each plan offers (guest pass, group classes, etc.) and express your desired plan when you sign up.*



## SPEAKING REQUESTS

Want DCP to speak to your organization, or table at your event? Contact **Erin Walsh** [erin.e.walsh@ct.gov](mailto:erin.e.walsh@ct.gov) to submit a request.

## Contact Us

**Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection**  
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 901  
Hartford, CT 06103-1840  
**Main Line:** (860) 713-6100 (8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

**Consumer Complaint Center**  
(860) 713-6300  
Toll Free: (800) 842-2649  
8:30am-4:30pm  
Email:  
[DCP.complaints@ct.gov](mailto:DCP.complaints@ct.gov)

**VISIT US ONLINE**  
[CT.GOV/DCP](http://CT.GOV/DCP)



## Exercise Your Rights: 5 Facts for Health Club Members

- 1) Health club memberships cannot automatically renew. The only exception is after a one-month trial. If the monthly price will change after the trial, the member must be notified in advance.
- 2) If you change your mind after signing up, you have three days to cancel your contract in writing.
- 3) No more pool access? You can cancel your contract if the health club no longer offers the amenities that were initially offered.
- 4) If a health club location closes, they cannot reassign you to a different location without your consent.
- 5) If you cancel your membership, health clubs are required to provide written confirmation of the cancellation request within 10 days. (Must include the effective date)

For more information, visit our [Health Clubs page](#)

## Identify Theft Awareness Week: January 26-30

To help protect your identify, the Federal Trade Commission suggests:

**Read** your credit card statements carefully and often.

**Review** statements from your health insurance plan. If claims do not match the care you received --- this may be a sign of healthcare fraud.

- Call the company right away if something looks off about your statement or bill.

**Shred** paper with your personal and financial information (prescription labels, banking statements, pay stubs, etc.)

**Have a tip we missed? A topic you want more information about? Send us an email at [DCP.Communications@ct.gov](mailto:DCP.Communications@ct.gov).**